

Minutes
Committee of the Whole
January 25, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Council members in attendance: Thaddeus Hoffmeister - Mayor, Al Delgado - Vice Mayor, Jim O'Reilly, Zach Green, Jeff LeRoy, Nancy Averett, Sarah Stankorb Taylor

Staff members in attendance: Rusty Herzog - Acting City Manager, Megan Statt Blake - Community Development Director, Mike Lippert - Water Works Director, Dennis Brown - Fire Chief

Presentations from Prospective Companies to Perform City Manager Search: Mr.

Herzog individually introduced each company as they provided their presentations to the Members. Only some of the questions and answers from Councilmembers and the companies will be covered in these minutes. The meeting was recorded and can be viewed in its entirety on the City's YouTube channel.

Slavin Management – Mr. David Krings & Mr. Robert Slavin

Mayor Hoffmeister asked what would be done to engage the local community and what experience does the company have in gauging the local community to find out their thoughts on the hiring process. Mr. Krings replied that the options are plenty and his company will do what City Council chooses however in most cases he conducts a meet and greet with a selection of folks that the City would like to have involved in the hiring process. Sometimes clients prefer to meet at the beginning of the process with certain community leaders or more. Also, charettes are an option as well and can be held during the day or at night, or both. Additionally, the company prefers to meet with the senior staff members as they learn a lot about the community in talking with staff members and community leaders. A moderated interview in a public forum is another option that can be done.

Mr. O'Reilly suggested that the ability of the candidate to deal with sudden shocks to the tax base, such as Wyoming has experienced with COVID, and a decrease in the anticipated income is going to be a concern. He asked if the company has encountered this elsewhere and what has been the successes of candidates from other places in dealing with the sudden downturn of expected revenue. Mr. Krings stated that this is not unique to Wyoming and is something that he has been dealing with across the country. He believes it would be a hard time to find Wyoming a manager who has not dealt with that than it would be in finding one that has. Mr. Slavin added that if COVID has not caused a manager to manage this kind of environment then the recession has. There are folks that have become more talented managers and more fiscally responsible managers as a result of some of the issues they have had to face over the last 10-15 years.

Mr. Delgado stated that he assumes the company has participated in a city manager search since March 2020 up to today, and he asked what approaches are being done today that are different than before the pandemic that was used to reach out to community members for the community engagement component. Additionally, Mr. Delgado inquired what changes or accommodations have been made due to COVID in order to be able to reach out and get a basic understanding of what that candidate is and what that soft skill of that candidate would be. [Summarizing] Mr. Slavin explained that once the pandemic hit and travel restrictions were in place, most of the "in-person" meetings and interviews as well as all of the community involvement exercises had to be held via Zoom or by telephone. As for community involvement sessions, residents were asked to submit questions ahead of time, which were pre-checked by the city attorney. Mr. Krings stated that his company is flexible enough to involve the community to the extent and the manner in which the city wants the community to be involved.

Mr. Delgado asked if Slavin Management were to be hired in February what they see the timeline being until the final two or three candidates are considered before Council. Mr. Slavin explained that as COVID has changed many things about the process it is generally finished within 90 days from the date Council approves a job profile until the interviews. The sooner the process, the better, as they have found that good people apply early on.

Waverly Partners – Mr. Ted Plattenburg & Ms. Sara Cikalo

Ms. Stankorb Taylor commented that the Wyoming community will want to feel as though they are part of this process and they will want to pitch in and help find the next city manager and she asked how the company will conduct focus group sessions during COVID restrictions. Mr. Plattenburg explained that the key to these conversations is to be as upfront and transparent as possible and to make the person very comfortable that you are listening to them directly and that you hear them directly. Some options could include an open forum by phone call and those that want to participate can step in or off of a phone call. Other times, it could be a combination of phone calls, virtual events, and maybe some coffees to get to that relevant comfort level that people share what their interest is, what their fears are, and lastly, it is about teamwork. Everyone is busy and it is sometimes tough to get together but it is a very important part of the process to make sure the community feels that they have been heard and key stakeholders feel that they have been heard.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor asked if the company facilitates an online survey or something that the entire community could pitch in and do. Mr. Plattenburg stated that there are a number of technological advances that he uses and the key is to make it as easy as possible to get good and relevant information. Ms. Cikalo added that the company recently finished a search during COVID from start to finish. No one met in person throughout the process and it was still a successful outcome. By now, most people have become accustomed to meeting on line. In order to set a successful tone, letting people know that they have a voice and that their voices will be heard, not necessarily a vote, but a voice; people are

generally open to this concept and are willing to share what is important to them and what they would like to see in a particular role. Ms. Cikalo stated that the company would work with the city to determine if it wants to open the process up to a very broad community outreach or if selected folks from different groups and organizations, the company will work with the city in house and then they would handle the outreach and getting people to open up and share what is important to them.

Ms. Averett asked how the search would be conducted to include diversity in terms of candidates. Mr. Plattenburg stated that in every slate of candidates that he has, there has been a number of diverse candidates on it. He cannot know up front what it is, but it is very important for him to do that. Most of his clients require that we have diversity on every slate that we put together. You will see a very diverse slate but what is going to be the commonality is all those candidates can do this job. His company is quite good at this and has been doing this for the last 15-20 years. Ms. Averett asked if the company has a method for its own implicit bias that might get in the way since you would be narrowing down a greater pool of candidates. Mr. Plattenburg stated that 25 years of search experience is what the method is. The company opens the door, and his team wants to get to know that individual, to get to know their biases, and to get to know their leanings, so, in the end there's a number of tools that we can bring in to help us transparently see a candidate and that is our goal, to work with the city to understand what the candidate has and what the candidate does not have.

Mr. Delgado asked for clarification from Ms. Cikalo regarding the search recently completed during COVID, he asked how they were able to draw out the soft skills of the candidates so that you had the ability to match candidates to whatever the job perspective was. Ms. Cikalo explained that on the front end, the profile is established consisting of the technical and hard skills as well as the soft skills that are important; getting to know the community, the search committee, and what is important; that helps her to identify the soft skills that the city is looking for. Through the years of doing search work and being able to build relationships with candidates, it is not transactional, it is relationship building and getting to know them. When the process was completed on line more time was spent, on the whole, over Zoom to make sure the company was getting a good feel versus sitting across from one another and being able to shake hands and pick up on all those nuances. It probably took more time to feel that we were comfortably assessing the soft skills but it worked and their clients were extremely happy with the candidate. The three month check in was recently completed and everything is going great.

Mr. Delgado asked what the proposed timeline would be if the company were to be hired in February. Mr. Plattenburg reviewed the step-by-step process by week of the proposed timeline and summarize that the process could be completed in 14 weeks.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor asked what the reasoning is behind the concerns of public records requests as Mr. Plattenburg mentioned it several times in his proposal. Mr. Plattenburg explained that the press drives this process in that they are generally looking for smoke on a candidate on a slow news day and they want to know who the candidates are. Confidentiality is important on that side. He added that he was involved in a project with Mr. O'Reilly through OKI on a search for clues to the background on the public records requests. Mr. O'Reilly commented that he wrote the three volume book on public disclosure of government files. He believes that the circumstances of the individual's departure from their previous job is absolutely essential to Council's evaluation. Whether we think he or she will be a success, is something you do not want to find on the public record. You do not want to find it in the press but it is important to know and to the extent that they are willing to share it, that is great. If they are not, this may be a red flag, in his opinion. Ms. Cikalo stated that there are two sides to the public record and Mr. O'Reilly is correct, certainly from the search committee side, from a candidate perspective, anytime there is Executive Session or there has been something electronically communicated, it can be requested by the press; it could be requested by anyone, but predominantly it is the press, and so the names of those candidates would then appear in print. Regardless of whether it is an open record or not is confidentiality for the candidate until they are fully in and committed to wanting the role, so we would work with the city to determine up front at what point do we want to notify the candidates that they must present their information and be privy to notes from a Council meeting or printed in an article so it is communication with the candidate and with you to make sure that we are on the same page as to where we want that confidentiality line to have to be lifted in order to ensure a good process.

Management Partners – Mr. Greg Horn

Mr. O'Reilly asked Mr. Horn to describe how an Assessment Center process would be conducted. Mr. Horn reviewed some of the Assessment Center processes he has facilitated with other colleagues and explained that it is a combination of oral and written exercises with no more than four candidates over the course of a day. Some of the situational exercises might be how to handle a press conference under pressure, how a candidate delegates responsibilities, how a delegation of duties might be handled. The candidate's multi-tasking capabilities are judged and how they might react to two or three scenarios happening simultaneously. An all-day written exercise is also conducted while the candidates are coming in and out of their practicum examinations. It is a very thorough process and it is one more tool in the toolbox for helping Council make its evaluation.

Mayor Hoffmeister asked Mr. Horn to describe some of his past experiences in engaging the community in the process of hiring a city manager. Mr. Horn stated that one of the communities that he did in the last year was Middletown, Ohio, a community many may be familiar with of 48,000 residents; the community has certainly had their challenges over the past decade or two. Their City Council was very focused on getting it right and getting someone in the community that was representative of what the various community

thought processes, ideals, goals, etc. were. Mr. Horn stated that he did a thorough interview with the Council as a group, and he also met with any Council member that wanted to meet individually and at that time the meetings were done by Zoom. Some Council members chose to meet with him individually and some requested to wait and meet in a group effort to find out what were the problems, what are the challenges they have had in the past, where do they think they have shortcomings, what are the kind of qualities they think someone has to truly possess to be to be successful in Middletown. A Zoom meeting was then held with the key staff members. Their key staff members were divided into two group because there were twelve department heads; he typically does not do more than five or six, this meeting lasted about 60-90 minutes and then a meeting was held with a group of community leaders that Mr. Horn had met with individually. The community leader group consisted of a district court judge, school superintendent, and the director of the Chamber of Commerce. This meeting was done via Zoom and in person where there was only Mr. Horn and this person in order to maintain social distancing. Following that meeting the entire group met with 15 community representatives and faith leaders. All of this data was collected and compared by groupings, not by individuals, and shared with City Council to see if it matched what City Council thought its next city manager needed to be from a standpoint of qualifications and traits. Overall, it was a good process that took an extra day or two to do it this way, but Mr. Horn felt that the community was appreciative of the opportunity to provide input.

Mayor Hoffmeister asked about the general public. Mr. Horn stated that the city of Middletown chose three members of the community to participate. Other communities have allowed general public input by utilizing a third-party survey tool (such as Survey Monkey) or a survey posted on the city's website. Some have allowed for a 72 hour period for people in the community to weigh in on what they think the major goals are to the city. Mr. Horn stated that he determines what type of community Wyoming is and are there any unique challenges that warrant unique characteristics.

Mr. Delgado commented that Mr. Horn had shared that he retired from the city of Centerville in 2017. He asked if Mr. Horn was involved in the process of finding his replacement. Mr. Horn stated that he had not participated in the process as he specifically asked not to be involved.

Mr. Delgado asked Mr. Horn what he sees as some of the contrast and soft skills that he may have had that his predecessor had to have and what other kinds of skills the new leader had that he did not. Mr. Horn stated that he had been with Centerville for 25 years, which is a long time to stay in a community and so he had an extensive knowledge of the community. He knew every employee as they had been hired by him during a time of turnover several years ago mostly due to retirements. Institutional knowledge was a strong skill. The downside to being in one place for 20-25 years, he explained, and in bringing in younger people, they likely have better technical skills, well versed in technology. One of

the first things Mr. Horn asks a council is to tell him what the previous manager did well, what were the strengths and weaknesses and what the areas are that could be improved on or built upon with the next manager. Additionally, Mr. Horn might ask a new manager if they are satisfied with the staff because there are certain managers that are “change agents” where many people tend to leave when they come into a new position, maybe on their own, maybe because they are forced to leave. This is something that he would need to know from Council, if they are satisfied with the folks who are currently in house or would it bother Council if someone came in and “stirred the pot” knowing this would create a significant staff turnover. On the other side, if Council believes it currently has a nice operation and it is simply looking for someone to build upon that without starting over in any particular area.

Novak Consulting Group – Ms. Catherine Tuck Parrish

Ms. Averett commented that in Ms. Parrish’s plan there is mention of developing a first year organizational goal and she asked for more details on this process. Ms. Parrish explained that goals would be developed for the new city manager. Many organizations may have many goals and many of the organization’s goals may become the city manager’s goals but they are not always exactly the same. Just as Council has goals and, of course, the city manager, is responsible for making sure those are carried out. What we do is when we talk to you, if you were to hire us, we would talk to each Council member individually to hear your individual viewpoints. She would also talk with some staff members, your acting city manager, and other key department heads that are going to have ideas about what might be on the horizon that has not hit your agenda yet. Ms. Parrish explained that she would develop those goals and then that would be a conversation among Council, to determine if all were in agreement on what the goals are before the recruitment process is created. Ms. Parrish stated that Columbus could make some changes that are going to impact you and other things could come into effect, so it should be a living breathing document. It is very helpful as she is talking to prospective applicants, because they get excited about what they might be doing, and also it gives them a realistic view of what is on the horizon and it also helps save the manager some time when they first arrive, they have a starting point of what the priorities are, they need to check in all the time on that, but it is a starting point.

Mr. LeRoy questioned that Ms. Parrish talked about women candidates and people of color and he questioned why she believes it is hard to find them and what, if any, is her secret to finding them. Ms. Parrish stated that the reason it is hard to find is because they are in demand and they are not represented in the pipeline. She could spend probably ten minutes on explaining why the pipeline and local government is not great right now, and it has everything to do with what is going on across the country. Of the last ten years where all those pipeline positions were cut and a variety of other things so the people that are in positions that are ready to be city managers, women, and people of color, they are just a very small percentage of the applicant pool, and so you have to end there. You have to

work extra hard to bring them into the applicant pool. Ms. Parrish explained that her firm has done things for the last ten years to help build that pool, because we have long term strategies and short term strategies. One, is our involvement with ELGL, an across the country organization of people that are generally newer to local government and it is a big umbrella group. One does not have to always think they are going to be a city manager in order to join the group, she has found the partnership with them over the years, to be very helpful. They help her identify good talent and they have an incredible network that is very strong and very social media savvy, and so we can reach those candidates in ways that we cannot always reach those that are in ICMA or other things.

Mayor Hoffmeister asked Ms. Parrish to share past examples of how to engage the local community and what practices, if she were selected, would conduct for the city. Ms. Parrish stated that there are three main times when you would engage the community. In her opinion, one of the most important times is after you have hired the person. The first task would be to conduct an online survey which allows anyone to participate without any barrier of having to go somewhere, and allows you to hear from people that you would not necessarily hear from. Additionally, she recommends conducting a focus group with key stakeholders and other community leaders. The typical resident, regardless of how well educated or how well engaged, the idea of what a city manager does is sometimes a mystery, they may think they are the mayor or a council member. If you gather a group of folks who have a better idea of what a city manager does in a focus group, it is an opportunity to hear from that group too. Many communities have their own public meetings and that is another way that you hear from people who talk to you all the time. Ms. Parrish added that she believes Wyoming has community members who are super engaged and she finds it helpful to have a combination of people that you may not normally hear from, those that work very closely with the administration, and some combination of that can be healthy. This feedback is maybe the most helpful to those that are going through the interview process, so they have a direct line to hear from your residents in a way that is more easily digestible. The second community engagement opportunity is during the interview process and people have very different views of whether that is appropriate or not. Transparency and openness is on one side of the pendulum and the other pendulum is we have to make sure we are trying to get the best applicants. The best applicants have the most to lose for being in a public process. She encouraged Council, whether they hire her company or not, that if it decides to engage residents in some way that you wait and do that with the top finalists because people have a lot to lose. Ms. Parrish believes that you want to remember the importance of the elected body's responsibility to be the hiring and supervising authority as a body. It is an unnatural way in in the United States really, to have a multitude of bosses, it is not an easy process for Council or for the manager, so she believes it is important that you retain that final decision making. Lastly, she believes that informal interactions is important as well. During COVID, she has conducted a community meeting on-line, where questions were accepted ahead of time and through the on-line chat feature where the mayor was the facilitator.

She conducted a similar process with employees. There are many different ways to engage people. After the person is selected is perhaps the most important time for engagement to onboard them in a way that is meaningful and helpful and Council will play a huge role in that.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor asked Ms. Parrish if her firm conducts any type of in-box exercise, or assessment center, for a number of final candidates. Ms. Parrish stated that her company can do these types of exercises in a number of different ways. One could be a writing assignment in advance or on the spot; she is not a fan of giving a city manager an on the spot writing assignment because we are assuming they can write in some way, and you can get that verified in many different ways, but you can also ask them how they would prioritize five or six different tasks. Also mock counseling sessions with employees or dealing with a difficult customer are other scenarios, or tests, that can be done with the final candidates. In addition to the kinds of management components to the assessment, there could also be a technical component where city managers would evaluate city managers, police would evaluate police, etc. Any way that Council would like to proceed with this type of evaluation Ms. Parrish can help develop the process as well as develop interview questions.

Wyoming Lockland Water Consortium

Mr. Mike Lippert, Water Works Director, stated that he would like to discuss a possible Wyoming/Lockland water consortium in which Wyoming would supply wholesale drinking water to Lockland. Wyoming Water Works was established in 1892. Very early on, we began supplying water to neighboring jurisdictions – Arlington Heights and Lockland. Wyoming began having trouble keeping up with water demand during World War II, so we had advised Arlington Heights and Lockland to pursue other water sources. Lockland built its own plant in 1949 and has operated it since. Arlington Heights began using water from Greater Cincinnati Water Works.

Lockland has a 70+ year old water plant which has experienced numerous problems recently. Lockland has utilized emergency water from Greater Cincinnati Water Works several days in the last couple of years due to water plant issues, supply well issues, and water main breaks. Mr. Lippert shared that he believes they have had trouble keeping up with maintenance issues in their aging plant.

After many years of planning, Wyoming built its current water plant, which went into operation in the year 2000. It is rated at 3 mgd production. Mr. Lippert stated that when he started in 2004, Wyoming was using approximately 1 mgd average usage with peak days near 2 mgd. Recently, we have been averaging approximately 0.7 mgd. Before the plant was built, there was concern the Mill Creek aquifer may not have enough volume to supply Wyoming. That issue has been alleviated by a couple of things – first, Reading now uses

water from Greater Cincinnati Water Works – not their own. Second, General Electric buys water from Southwest Water District, which is supplied from the west side of Cincinnati. Essentially, Lockland has been having problems with water supply recently. And, Wyoming has seen declining revenues and a water plant operating at 25% of capacity. There is a potential synergy here.

In 2020, Wyoming/Lockland performed a joint study on the feasibility of Wyoming providing wholesale water to Lockland. Burgess & Niple, a regional engineering firm, performed the study. They concluded Wyoming has the capacity to assist Lockland (as Lockland only uses 0.4 mgd typically). There are no plans for Wyoming to take over Lockland's distribution system, billing, etc. So, potential liability is limited. Interestingly, the work required to tie the systems together is minimal. It would require two borings underneath the CSX railroad and new pipes installed connecting their mains to ours with meters and appropriate backflow devices. In addition, some electronics would be added to their water tank so Wyoming could monitor and control the water elevation in their tank. The capital cost for this work is estimated to be \$288,500. This could be considered as phase one. Phase two could include tying in the Lockland wells to our system. To do that, we would have to run a water main from our water plant to their water plant, which is just over half a mile. The estimated cost for adding their wells to our system is \$765,000. Based on the phase one costs, our engineer estimated a \$4.90/ccf rate for Lockland. They would have to adjust their residential rate higher as they would still need to bill and take care of their distribution system. By comparison, Wyoming's internal rate is \$6.56/ccf. The rate and services would need to be ultimately negotiated, but their initial review was favorable.

Lockland's strengths include their three good well fields that meet all EPA requirements, although their conditions are not known. Their weaknesses include an old and dilapidated water plant and their distribution system needs work. Wyoming's strengths include our relatively new water plant. Our weaknesses are, although we have six wells and they work fine, by current EPA standards we are not allowed to replace the wells because you are required to provide a 300 foot of isolation area around each well. Currently, our wells are in our downtown area but we are grandfathered and can continue to use them and we do not have to abide by the 300 foot requirement. Another benefit to Wyoming would be an increase in our water revenue in a period of declining usage. We could access another well field to reduce risk of contamination. Wholesale water will not lead to substantially increased costs for us (economies of scale) – we will not bill the Lockland residents for their water nor will we take care of their distribution system. The challenges and obstacles for Wyoming include the costs for an increase in treatment chemicals, maintenance, and sludge disposal costs. Additionally, with the expanded working shifts, Mr. Lippert will suggest hiring an additional full-time operator to assist in maintenance, etc. The benefits to Lockland is that it absolves them of water plant responsibility. The water to Lockland customers would be supplied by the wells rather than from the river so the water consistency and quality will be similar to Wyoming's.

Mr. Lippert explained that he has been meeting with Lockland over the last year primarily with Krista Blum, the Village Administrator and Eric Brock, the Public Works Director. In his last discussion with Ms. Blum, she has maintained her enthusiasm but had not had discussions yet with the Lockland Village Council and she was unsure of what their initial thoughts might be. It was Ms. Blum's opinion that Lockland does not want to sell their well fields but that they would likely entertain an agreement to lease their well fields if we entered into some kind of agreement.

Lastly, Mr. Lippert explained that Wyoming would not be responsible for the water billing to individual Lockland households, likely, we would produce one bill to the Village, mostly likely monthly, and go from there.

Mr. O'Reilly asked Fire Chief Dennis Brown, if he has any concerns about water pressure during any fire incidents in Lockland, whether or not there would be sufficient water pressure for an industrial fire, for example and whether this would take pressure away from Wyoming. Chief Brown explained that it would be based on the time and what the demand is. He has not specifically looked at what the water flow rates are in Lockland, but it also depends on their infrastructure. He would have to do some research and get back with Mr. O'Reilly on his question.

Mr. O'Reilly asked Mr. Jeremiah Caudill, Finance Director, if when we issued the bonds for the water system, was a commitment made regarding the maintenance and flow, etc. Is this going to change or put at risk the representations we made when we issued the bonds for our water system. Mr. Caudill explained that the water plant will be paid off this year.

Mr. O'Reilly asked Mr. Lippert if, in general, is the maintenance of the water system a determining factor in the loss of leaks in Lockland. Wyoming's employees do a terrific job of minimizing our loss of water from leaks and water main breaks. He cannot say the same for Lockland as he does not have any personal knowledge. He would be concerned if we tied into Lockland and they would have a maintenance issue which would diminish our capacity. Mr. Lippert stated that this is a valid concern and why we want to do the wholesale water rather than actually taking over their whole distribution system. His gut feeling is that they are making a lot of improvements laterally as they have hired some good people, and they have started improving, but they have a long way to go in understanding their system completely. Mr. Lippert stated that, as part of the discussion, he studied the maps of their system to see if this could be even feasible and frankly, they were not the best. He shares Mr. O'Reilly's concerns but on the other hand, it could be a benefit in some respects. Mr. O'Reilly expressed appreciation of the good work Mr. Lippert and his team is doing and he is not critical of the concept. He commented that he had a key role in the negotiation of the General Electric air stripper that cost \$3.6 million to install and the city received \$3.1 million from General Electric because it was their contaminants that

were in the water stream. They were taking out contaminated water and blowing it through the air stripper. Wyoming was getting more pure water than other areas. That's an interest, of course, in maintaining that and using what we had done with General Electric but he would not want to be in a situation where we make a similar representation to our people and instead they get water from Lockland. Is water from Lockland going to go through our air stripper if not, can we assure our people that water from Lockland is going to be as pure as the water that goes through our air stripper. Mr. Lippert stated that the aquifer is the same aquifer which is further upstream, north of General Electric. There are some other concerns of industry near the aquifers, but nothing is perfect. Lockland's water is a little softer than ours so it may not need as much lime, but we would have to look at contamination possibilities per the EPA. Their part of the aquifer is less susceptible to getting contaminated but yet it is still possible. This is something we will have to investigate to be sure. Mr. Lippert further explained that Wyoming has six wells and we rotate them every month and in our small area, they are each a little different. If we would start including the three wells in Lockland we would then rotate nine wells over a twelve month period. It would be a challenging at first but he stated that he believes we can do it.

Mr. O'Reilly commented that Wyoming has had previous discussions with Lockland on infrastructure issues and in the past Lockland's elected officials seem to be somewhat resentful of Wyoming, which may be his misunderstanding. Mr. O'Reilly expressed concern that in any arrangement we make with Lockland, that it benefits our residents and that this may stir up further hostility on the part of Lockland. He asked if we thought about that as a factor to take into account when we are considering boosting Lockland's water supply. Mr. Lippert stated that Mr. O'Reilly's comments are interesting and all he can add is that the meetings he has had with their Village Administrator and their water staff have been very productive. In fact, we have been working together by helping them out a couple of times and they have helped us out with one of our well issues. He stated that we have been getting along rather well.

Mr. Herzog commented that when Wyoming was talking to its engineering firm one of the things that they wanted us to realize is that Lockland is in a position where they are eventually going to have to be put in the position to decide if they want to repair their plant, or they will have to go to Cincinnati Water or something else. The question for Lockland will be what is best for them. Could Wyoming, on a smaller scale, provide them something with more long-term price stability versus a Cincinnati Water system who may, on a short term, give them a lower price, but on the long term they will come in with a higher price, thus being at a higher price for the residents of Lockland.

Mr. O'Reilly commented that hypothetically, seven or eight months from now, in a public meeting, voters in Wyoming will be asking why did you Wyoming do this deal, what is in it for us, did Wyoming do this for the benefit of Lockland as opposed to Wyoming. It may or

may not be raised but he would like to be as certain as certain can be that we can defend this decision as a good protection for the protection to the people of our community.

Mr. Green questioned what Wyoming can anticipate as an average gross revenue by agreeing to this wholesale opportunity. Mr. Lippert explained that as part of the study we would have approximately \$800,000 in additional revenue at \$4.90 per 100 cubic feet. Mr. Green commented that the revenue would be just shy of \$1 million and questioned if we are confident with our maximum rates and their maximum rates that we are still well below the barriers that would cause any type of problems. Mr. Lippert stated this was correct. Mr. Green commented that, in his opinion, this is a win-win for the city as we have excess water that we are not using and have an opportunity to bring in additional revenue of almost 10% of our entire budget. Obviously, there is some risk of cross-contamination but not anymore risk than what we currently have. He believes it is a good idea and he agrees with Mr. O'Reilly's concerns that later on in the year, when Council members are knocking on doors, the risk of a resident expressing displeasure that we are selling our water to Lockland, is a concern.

Mr. O'Reilly reiterated that he is not against anything that the water department is doing, everyone is doing an excellent job. Burgess & Niple is a nationally recognized firm, but this is a case of where Council members either on the phone or when knocking on doors in this election season have to know what to say when asked questions from the residents. This is not only a way to help Lockland but it is also helping Wyoming financially.

Mr. Lippert added that in his conversations with Lockland's Village Administrator, the goal is to supply wholesale water to Lockland. They also suggested that Wyoming could be Lockland's emergency water source as needed. In case their plant failed, Wyoming would take Cincinnati Water Works' place and supply emergency water to Lockland, so this too is an option that can be considered as well.

Mr. Delgado asked Mr. Lippert for an estimated time frame of when phase one could potentially come into play. Mr. Lippert stated that in a best case scenario, if an agreement were to be made in 2021, maybe in 2022 we could begin phase one. Phase two would follow about a year later. Mr. Lippert added that both phases have to happen, we would have to do both phase one and phase two. Mr. Delgado asked what would happen if we completed phase one and then Lockland decides not to sell us their wells. Mr. Lippert explained that when you do not use equipment for a while it simply stops working and in his opinion, it would not make sense for them to throw their wells away. Mr. Delgado asked Mr. Lippert if the cost estimates includes the additional staff that would need to be hired. Mr. Lippert clarified that the cost estimates were revenue costs, not expenditures. We do not have a firm calculation for the expenditures at this time.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor asked if a bond would be needed to pay for this or is Lockland responsible for any of the expenses. Mr. Lippert explained that the cost would go into the rate calculation. With the EPA pushing for its regionalization plan, Mr. Lippert is hopeful that there may be some grant money available. Perhaps Lockland might have a better chance at receiving some grant money, but we will have to work out some of the details of the capital costs. Ms. Stankorb Taylor questioned the \$4.90 per 100 cubic foot as the wholesale rate and then there would be the cost for distribution. She asked Mr. Lippert if he has any idea what that additional costs would be. In terms of perception, if Lockland residents suddenly see their bills go up and see Wyoming's name on their bill, not knowing the details or costs of the water, would this create a miss-feelings. Mr. Lippert explained that Lockland's billed rate is currently lower than Wyoming's billed rate and he is unsure how much the consortium would add to their bills, but this is something that he will look into further.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor questioned if we were not to expand the number of wells we have access to, what would this mean for Wyoming. Mr. Lippert speculated that if Wyoming got access to Lockland's wells, we would start using them. He would try to exercise all of the wells throughout the year, to make sure that they are usable. If you have nine wells there is probably a good chance one or more might have issues and they might have to be worked on so it would be helpful to have alternate wells as a backup.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor questioned whether the timeline of the roof replacement project on the water storage tank have any connection to this proposal. Mr. Lippert stated that he would rather not work on two major projects at the same time. The roof replacement will be done first before proceeding with the Lockland work.

Mr. O'Reilly commented that in terms of Lockland's capacity and ability, he has the perception, and he may be wrong, that Lockland is not devoted the detailed attention to its leakage and its lead and other aspects that Wyoming does. We have done a much better job of following up on the quality of the water as delivered than Lockland does. He expressed concern on how he can stand before voters and ask people to vote for him because we would be giving this better water to Lockland, it does not strike him as an appropriate decision on his part as an elected official.

Mr. Herzog commented that one of the things we are looking at is to see if we have the capacity to provide water to Lockland and it appears that we do according to the engineers. Lockland would be purchasing the water wholesale, so the issues that they have if there are issues with their system, that would still be something they would continue to need to work on. The question is to why we are providing it to Lockland. We have the capacity to do it, it would generate additional revenue, and then that revenue, after expenses, could provide an opportunity to lower our own costs or to help assist us with additional revenue to help in the water plant however we need to.

Mr. O'Reilly commented that eventually, yes, Wyoming may benefit from the additional water revenue. In the near term, we have to think about how the Wyoming average rate payer responds to the merits of giving something to Lockland that it have not afforded for itself. We would be in jeopardy of our voters saying we do not want to subsidize or assist Lockland on the prospect that they eventually get access to wells that we do not have yet.

Ms. Averett questioned if Wyoming's water bills will go up if we sell water to Lockland. Mr. Lippert stated that eventually they would be lower over time because of the economies of scale. Similar to Greater Cincinnati Water Works, they have taken over 80% of the county and their rates are obviously much lower than ours.

Ms. Averett commented that she does not see anything wrong with giving water that we are not using to a neighboring community if they are going to pay for it and the EPA is telling us we should be regionalizing water for economies of scale. She does not understand the relationship of this to campaigning for office. This is making an informed and responsible choice whether we want to do something is has nothing to do with campaigning for office.

Mr. O'Reilly explained that he believes that accountability is the centerpiece for democracy. We are accountable to the people who elect us. Some of whom will agree with us and some people will disagree. He does not feel comfortable defending a Lockland transaction on the data that we have now and he is concerned if it appears we are helping Lockland there will be a response among some voters that we are not helping Wyoming enough.

Mayor Hoffmeister asked Mr. Lippert if City Council needs to make a decision on this today or is this for informational purposes. Mr. Lippert stated that if the City wants to move forward we do not have to make that decision today but we can get more specific data as we need to.

Mr. O'Reilly asked if a copy of the report from Burgess & Niple can be shared with Council as it sounds like it would be helpful.

Ms. Stankorb Taylor commented that as Mr. O'Reilly raised the concern, if Mr. Lippert has any information on the piping or anything bringing the water from the wells into Wyoming or any other data available so that we can base any decisions on the research that has been done.

Mr. Delgado asked Mr. Lippert if he was bringing this information to Council to primarily inform them that this is a possibility that may happen in the future. Mr. Lippert stated that this evening's presentation was for informational purposes and if there is any political will to make it happen, then yes, and if not, we will have the possibility in the future to look at

this again. Mr. Delgado asked clarification if Mr. Lippert was intending to have Council provide their decision on whether to move forward or not or to provide more information first. Mr. Lippert stated that if Members are ready to provide direction this evening it can, and if not, we can decide at a later date.

Mr. Delgado stated that he is in favor of moving forward. Mayor Hoffmeister stated that he is in favor. Ms. Averett stated that she too is in favor. Mr. Green stated that he is in favor as this is a win-win and he applauded Mr. Lippert's efforts in investigating this option. Ms. Stankorb Taylor stated that she would prefer to have more information but it sounds promising.

Miscellaneous

Ms. Stankorb Taylor commented that Rusty has been working with the Environmental Stewardship Commission's Storm Water Study Group and they are about to put out a survey that they have been working very hard on for several months. The survey will be asking residents to report if they have had any flooding in their homes or in their yards and eventually they will be gathering this information seeing what the source of flooding could be as well as what parts of the city flooding is occurring. She will be researching various green infrastructure projects that other cities received grant money for and she will put this in a booklet and distribute it to staff. This is a research group and they are about to begin phase one of their research. You will be seeing a video in the future featuring the acting city manager and a couple of community volunteers to get people excited about the survey. If you experience any storm water issues she encouraged everyone to fill out the survey. You do not have to provide your actual address or even your name, just an intersection will be helpful in determining where flooding is occurring.

Mr. O'Reilly reported that he has been elected Vice President of the First Suburbs Consortium for 2021. The consortium is looking carefully at the impact on us from the 2021-2022 reapportionment. Every ten years after the final census data is released, a reallocation within Columbus of the voting districts occur and we are watching carefully to see what the impact will be on our suburbs with the potential loss or merger of some of those positions; first as to State Representative then, as to US Congress. Keep in mind as the Census data will be coming out, and in responding to that, the State legislature will be reapportioning the northern suburbs and that will be apportioning the first Congressional district and the second Congressional district so it is something to keep in mind as you read about what is happening in Columbus in the next few months.

Mr. Green commented that he hopes the Mayor had an uneventful deployment last week and he appreciates Mayor Hoffmeister doing his part in our inauguration of our new administration. He wished everyone a wonderful week. Mr. O'Reilly added that he is happy that Mr. Green has his health back.

Mayor Hoffmeister asked everyone to stay safe and to look out for your neighbor.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Delgado moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Stankorb Taylor seconded the motion. By voice vote, all voted yes, the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debby Martin, Executive Assistant

Approved:

Thaddeus Hoffmeister, Mayor